

Somerville Wage Theft Advisory Committee

Francisca Sepúlveda (Somerville Worker Center)
Jesse Clingan (Somerville City Council, Ward 4)
Jose Venancio (Brazilian Worker Center)
Myrna Morales (MassCOSH)
Nancy Macias-Smith (Somerville High School)
Colleen Fitzpatrick (Our Revolution Somerville)

Juan Novoa (Carpenters Union)
Bill Dovhan (Somerville Community Corporation)
Andrew Lynn (Chamber of Commerce)
Darlene Lombos (Greater Boston Legal Council)
Jorge Rivera (Building and Construction Trades Council)

Meeting Minutes

Location: Online via Zoom; Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85693851683>

Date: Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Time: 6:00pm

Attendance

- Committee Members: Myrna Morales, Jesse Clingan, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Francisca Sepúlveda, Bill Dovhan, Andrew Lynn, Darlene Lombos.
- Interpreter(s): Dirce Gomez (Portuguese)

1. Request to sign AFL-CIO letter to Sec. Mayorkas and Walsh.

- Motion to sign AFL-CIO letter to Sec. Mayorkas and Walsh made by F. Sepúlveda.
- B. Dovhan: I think it's a great letter.
- A. Lynn: I don't think it's within our scope.
- J. Clingan: I could put it forward to the City Council, if this committee wants to recommend it.
- A. Lynn: I don't know if signing it ourselves is appropriate but recommending to the City Council may be.
- J. Clingan: Is it just us signing or would we be on a list with other organizations?
- F. Sepúlveda: yes with other organizations
- C. Fitzpatrick: I am in favor of signing and recommending to City Council
- Motion to send AFL-CIO letter to the City Council to be signed by them with the Wage Theft Advisory Committee recommendation, made by A. Lynn.
- The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Form subcommittees:

2.1. Somerville Wage Theft Ordinance Review

- D. Lombos: Somerville has the strongest municipal ordinance, trying to model across the state and make the case statewide. I took highlights from the ordinance and if we can enforce it there will be no wage theft in Somerville. *D. Lombos shared a summarized presentation of the City's Wage Theft Ordinance.*
- D. Lombos: Wage theft complaints have more depth when it comes from an advisory committee such as this. They can be very slow but if they know people are supporting the workers they will move faster. The A.G's Office is really good at responding. Thing about the Wage Theft Ordinance is that once people hear about it, it is preventative. The more people know they can't get away with it, it will deter companies from gaming the system.
- M. Morales: Can we amend the ordinance?

- J. Clingan: Yes, the City Council can amend it if the WTAC flags something and brings it to licensing. We still have to run by legal, at some point hopefully have our own (City Council) lawyer. Request for paid staff for this committee going in.
- D. Lombos: There is a template disclosure form that the City of Boston uses, that we could start using in the City. We should update it to reflect our ordinance because it is stronger. We could also have someone from the City of Boston come to one of our meetings and talk about operationalization and enforcement.
- J. Clingan: Some committees and City Councilors would like to be part of that.

2.2. **Wage Theft Cases, Education and Outreach, Annual Report**

- J. Clingan: I think subcommittees are valuable. Even at once a month there is a big gap between those meetings. One could be outreach and put together partnerships with our group. Another could be legal digging into Ordinance. We need to have frank discussion about how to operationalize. We should have an email address that goes to the Secretary or Chair.
- D. Lombos: What if we divided into two groups: internal (city process) and external (outreach and education)?
- M. Morales: My experience with the domestic workers bill of rights is around outreach. How could we get the library to schedule presentations? We could take the powerpoint to do some outreach.
- D. Lombos: we could also create a little know-your-rights wallet size calling card. 5 things to do, make sure you are getting a paycheck, etc.
- J. Clingan: I wouldn't be on either committee but would be a liaison. Using social media to have a presence. Somerville infrastructure has a Twitter handle. We can do a May Day event. People can decide on tasks.
- F. Sepulveda: Having a Facebook page would be great.
- J. Clingan makes a motion to appoint D. Lombos as point person of Internal Group, and M. Morales as point person of External Group.
 - Internal group members: D. Lombos, C. Fitzpatrick, A. Lynn
 - External group members: M. Morales, F. Sepulveda
- Motion was approved

3. **Education and Outreach**

- F. Sepulveda: Last meeting we talked about ideas to educate the youth and the community around wage-theft and their rights.
 - Schools
 - Speak to workers and businesses in the community
 - Talk to parishes in the community
 - *No other ideas presented.*

4. **Wage Theft Cases**

- F. Sepulveda: Jesse, can we get a list of current projects? I will get in touch with the Attorney General's Office to get a list of wage theft cases in Somerville.
- D. Lombos: If you need help connecting, let me know. I can set up a meeting with Lauren Moran, the Labor Division Chief.
- C. Fitzpatrick: Loop me in, please
- J. Clingan: What exactly am I asking the City for? Providing the WTAC with a copy of city contracts?
- F. Sepulveda: Contracts, licenses, TIFs, etc.
- A. Lynn: It would be good to have for cross-reference. People who have the contract but business is not necessarily in Somerville we wouldn't see it.

- D. Lombos: I would appreciate a flowchart to help us understand how the City works. What licenses does the city council oversee? Who is in charge of the EACC? If there is an official meeting between City Solicitor and EACC it would be helpful to know the name.
- J. Clingan: I will put some council orders in for the next meeting and also go through back channels.

5. Next Meeting: June 15, 2021 at 6pm

- F. Sepulveda: I will reach out to those members that weren't present today and see what group they would like to join. For the next meeting, each group should get together and brainstorm/decide on tasks.

6. Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn by F.Sepulveda. Motion passes unanimously.

Meeting Documents

- WTAC Meeting Agenda May 18, 2021
- PPT Somerville Wage Theft Ordinance - GBLC Slides

Meeting Minutes Approved on Tuesday, November 16, 2021.